

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 36

By Butt

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the owners of Armsdale Farm for 203 years of agricultural success.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute that most noble agricultural institution, the family farm, which serves as a cornerstone for our communities while bringing credit and acclaim to this State; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy family farm is the Armsdale Farm; founded in 1807 by James Armstrong, this Bi-Centennial farm has persevered 203 years through succeeding generations and despite coping with wars, floods, droughts, economic crises, and other obstacles presented by way of natural and human intervention; and

WHEREAS, James Armstrong was a member of one of the eleven families, all descendants from Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterian immigrants in South Carolina, who traveled to Williamson County, Tennessee, looking for land. Together the families purchased over 5,000 acres, located in what is now known as Maury County, from the heirs of General Nathaniel Greene. James Armstrong led the group of families to the area before Columbia, Tennessee, was settled; and

WHEREAS, Armsdale Farm's rich historic lineage includes Horace Armstrong, William Ridley, Sr., and his brother, Edward Armstrong. Horace Armstrong was the very first farmer to grow burley tobacco in Maury County, along with his brother and Mr. Ridley, Sr.; the Armstrong brothers were visionaries who foresaw the potential of raising mules on a large scale; and

WHEREAS, having contributed to the prosperity of Columbia, Tennessee, the land settled by James Armstrong, sometimes referred to as "the dimple of the Universe", was largely composed of Revolutionary land grants and was called "the agricultural center of the State of Tennessee" in pre-Civil War years; and

WHEREAS, the Gordon family has been co-stewards of the Armsdale Farm for almost 100 years; Horace Gordon, named after Horace Armstrong, was known as one of the best farmers in Maury County, and he and the Armstrong family were partners for over sixty years; and

WHEREAS, long recognized as the voice for agriculture in Columbia, Tennessee, Armsdale Farm has produced a wide variety of crops and livestock during its 200-plus years of loyal operation, including mules, hogs, tobacco, corn, wheat, barley, soy beans, and oats. The farm can be easily recognized by the pure bred Belted Galloway cattle, otherwise known as Oreo Cookie Cows, when traveling by road; and

WHEREAS, at a time when the segment of our population involved in agriculture continues to dwindle and agricultural literacy is on the decline, Armsdale Farm has renovated its traditional farming techniques after attending several conferences and being exposed to new literature, and this remarkable agricultural institution has now expanded to include organic practices and celebrates the use of heirloom seed as an integral part of its agricultural expertise; and

WHEREAS, the farm is aesthetically distinguished on the bright Tennessee horizon by the presence of two of Maury County's original and oldest tobacco barns; and

WHEREAS, Armsdale Farm is distinctive in its personal philosophy that the farm's first priority is to raise people who are honorable, wonderful citizens, and the agricultural products have always been secondary to this noble mission; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Armsdale Farm for its dedication to farming, recognizing the importance of the family farm to our communities and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate and commend the owners of Armsdale Farm for 203 years of agricultural success, and we honor this remarkable agricultural institution for its contributions to the agribusiness industry in Tennessee. We wish to extend to Armsdale Farm our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.